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attack, fraught with danger only for the assailant, with the unreasonableness of seeking *trüwe* where it does not exist.

I offer this explanation, not because I consider it original, for many readers must have interpreted the passage thus, but because, so far as I am aware, the Lachmann interpretation is still given, in all discussion of the *Eingang des Parzival*, as the accepted rendering of this mooted passage.

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A NOTE ON THE NAME BEAUMARCHAIS

The origin of the name Beaumarchais has never been satisfactorily explained. The young Pierre-Augustin Caron is said to have taken it from an estate belonging to his first wife. According to his friend and biographer Gudin, he adopted it even before his marriage: "Le mari de cette femme [i. e. Pierre-Augustin Franquet] était un vieillard, possesseur d'une très-petite charge dans la maison du Roi. . . . Il chercha à s'en défaire en faveur du jeune Caron, qui prit, dès ce moment, d'un très-petit fief le nom de Beaumarchais."¹ Franquet died in January, 1756, and in November of the same year the young Caron married his widow. "Alors seulement, au commencement de 1757, il ajouta pour la première fois à son nom ce nom de Beaumarchais qu'il devait rendre si fameux. Le manuscrit de Gudin nous apprend que ce joli nom fut emprunté à un très-petit fief appartenant à la femme du jeune Caron. Je ne sais pas au juste où était situé ce petit fief, j'ignore si c'était un fief servant ou un fief de haubert, ou simplement un fief de fantaisie."² Lintilhac quotes from an unpublished letter of Beaumarchais: "Le Sieur Caron de Beaumarchais, qui ne portait en 1756 que le nom de son père, avait acquis du Sieur Franquet une charge de contrôleur de la maison du roi."³ Bettelheim remarks: "Herr Franquet hatte einige Jahre nach seiner Vermählung ein Lehen namens Beaumarchais nach welchem Herr Caron sich seither nannte, . . . gekauft, wohin er sich häufig begab;" and he says further: "Die Provenienz des Namens Beaumarchais ist nicht weiter aufgeklärt . . . Vielleicht stammt der Name von Beaumarish (Bellomariscus)."⁴ The following is the statement of Hallays: "L'aventure ne lui avait en somme rap-

¹ Gudin de la Brenellerie, *Histoire de Beaumarchais*, pub. par M. Tourneux, Paris, 1888, p. 10.

² Louis de Loménie, *Beaumarchais et son temps*, Paris, 1856, vol. I, p. 90.

³ E. Lintilhac, *Beaumarchais et ses œuvres*, Paris, 1887, p. 3.

⁴ A. Bettelheim, *Beaumarchais, eine Biographie*, Frankfurt a. M., 1886, p. 33; he quotes from a pamphlet of 1789, of which there are copies in the British Museum: *Lettres des sieurs de Beaumarchais et Daudet, citées à l'audience du 14 Mars 1789, dans la cause du sieur Kornmann*. Cf. note on p. 595.

porté qu'une charge et un nom : car dès lors, il s'appela Beaumarchais du nom d'un petit fief ayant appartenu à sa femme. Il faut ajouter que personne ne sut jamais en quelle province de France était située la terre de Beaumarchais."⁵ In 1758 Beaumarchais used as his signature 'Caron de Beaumarchais,'⁶ and in 1761 he purchased the right to call himself noble. His wife, born Madeleine-Catherine Aubertin, had died in September, 1757; he had trouble with her family over property, but none, apparently, over the name.

No further information about the origin of the name is given by the biographers, some of whom appear even to doubt the existence of the alleged fief.⁷ Without assuming any necessary connection, it is interesting to notice the existence of an estate called Beaumarchais not far from Paris, some years before the birth of P. A. Caron. It is mentioned in a book printed in 1619, with this title: *Meslanges historiques, ou recveil de plvsieurs actes, traictez, lettres missiues, & autres memoires. . . .* A Troyes. Par Noel Moreau, dit le Coq. This collection of documents, which I shall have occasion to quote elsewhere, is ascribed to Nicolas Camusat. It is divided into six sections, with separate numbering of the folios in each section. The third section contains "Recveil sommaire des propositions & conclusions faictes en la chambre Ecclesiastique des Estatz tenus à Bloys en l'an 1576, dressé par M. Guillaume de Taix, Doyen en l'Eglise de Troyes, & député ausdicts Estatz pour les Ecclesiastiques du Baillage de Troyes."⁸ At the end of the report on the meeting of the States General there follows an autobiographical notice of the author, with this heading: "Pour memoire du lieu et race d'ou sont descenduz les de Taix Seigneurs de Fresnay à present, & anciennement d'Assez, Beaumarchais, Beauregard, les Turez & autres terres toutes proches, contigües & quasi adjacentes l'une de l'autre, assizes tant ledict Fresnay que lesdictes terres susdictes, en la Paroisse de Cloye pres de Chasteaudun au Diocese de Chartres." The dean of Troyes relates that in 1575 he visited his elder brother, Loys de Taix Escuyer, Seigneur dudict Fresnay, and other relatives; from an aged aunt he learned that the family was founded in the fourteenth century by "un nommé Mery de Taix seigneur de Semes & dudict lieu de Taix audict pays de

⁵A. Hallays, *Beaumarchais*, Paris, 1897, p. 12. Similarly, P. Bonnefon, *Beaumarchais*, Paris, 1887, p. 5: "C'était le nom d'un petit fief de sa femme, fief de fantaisie sans doute, et produit d'une imagination qui en créerait bien d'autres. Ce nom de terre devint donc un nom de guerre."

⁶E. Fournier, *Œuvres complètes de Beaumarchais*, Paris, 1884, p. i.

⁷The *Vie privée, politique et littéraire de Beaumarchais*, published anonymously at Paris in 1802, does not mention the subject. An Eustache de Beaumarchais died in 1294; near Mirande, in the department of the Gers, there is a town Beaumarchès, which was founded in 1288, and named after Eustache de B. (see P. Joanne, *Dictionnaire géographique et administratif de la France*, Paris, 1890, I, 353-4); and in Seine-et-Marne there is a Bois de Beaumarchais (*ibid.*): but these names have not been connected with the dramatist.

⁸*Op. cit.*, third section, ff. 72a-73b.

Touraine. . . . Duquel de Taix estoit par une longue reuolution d'années descendu Iean de Taix nostre Bisayeul seigneur de toutes les terres susdictes de Fresnay, Assez, Beaumarchais &c. qu'il eut pour son partage, comme puisné ou cadet de ladicte maison." Of the place-names here mentioned, two are recorded⁹ as located in the commune of Cloyes, in the southern extremity of the department of Eure-et-Loir, namely Beaumarchais and Fresnay; ¹⁰ Beauregard occurs six times in this department, but not near Cloyes; Assez and les Turez I do not find. In the *Dictionnaire des Postes et des Télégraphes* for 1905, Beaumarchais near Cloyes is mentioned as having ten inhabitants; six other minute localities with the same name are located in different parts of France,—the largest, with 134 inhabitants, in Seine-et-Marne.

Thus Beaumarchais is not imaginary as a place-name. Whether or not the *terre* of that name *en la Paroisse de Cloye pres de Chasteaudun* suggested a *nom de guerre* to the dramatist, perhaps some investigator will be able to determine.

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CHAUCER AND LANCASTER

Since the printing of my contribution, "Chaucer and Richmond," in the April *Notes*, my attention has been drawn (somewhat tardily, alas!) to Professor Skeat's short but suggestive letter to the *Academy* of March 23, 1894, endorsing heartily a solution of the enigmatic lines of *The Book of the Duchess* offered by the Bishop of Oxford. "'Long castle' is Lancaster, 'whyte' refers to Blaunche, 'Seynt Iohan' is meant to introduce the name of John of Gaunt, and the 'riche hil' refers to the fact that he was Earl of Richmond." Only one more word-play seems possible—the pun upon "Gaunt"—and this, as we all know, was reserved for a greater than Chaucer. Skeat sustains the episcopal interpretation by reference to the variant, "long castel," for "Lancaster" in two passages of the *Bruce* of Chaucer's contemporary, Barbour (*Book* xvii, ll. 285, 852). Ashamed of my own dullness, I give entire assent to this apt reading by sharper wits; but I still dully and doggedly maintain that the punning description of the "long castle with walls white on a rich hill" is so accurately descriptive of Richmond as to imply strongly Chaucer's personal knowledge of the Yorkshire building.

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⁹ See L. Merlet, *Dictionnaire topographique du département d'Eure-et-Loir*, Paris, 1861, s. v.

¹⁰ Called Fresnay-lès-Cloyes in 1290, Fresnay-sur-le-Loir in 1409 (*ibid.*). This name, variously written, is exceedingly common, "désignant un lieu anciennement planté de frêne, du latin *fraxinus*" (Joanne, *op. cit.*, III, 1573).